

Serial No. 08/645,073
Group Art Unit: 2766
Examiner: Gregory, G

[present time data generating means for] a present time data generator generating present time data indicating a present time;

[comparing means for] a comparator comparing the period of time with the present time;
and

[serving means for] a server serving the content when said [comparing means] comparator judges that the present time falls within the [sales] period of time.

2. (ALLOWED - TWICE AMENDED) A terminal according to claim 1, further comprising: a single medium, forming the content medium, storing a plurality of locked contents, each locked content provided with a period thereof and wherein the [serving means] server supplies said terminal with a key for unlocking the content.

3. (ALLOWED - TWICE AMENDED) A terminal according to claim 1, wherein said [serving means] server submits a request to a center when the present time falls within the period of time.

4. (ALLOWED - TWICE AMENDED) A sales system comprising:
a terminal comprising:
[period reading means for] a period reader reading a period on a content

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medium indicating a period of time during which [the] a content can be served by submitting a request to a center;

[present time data generating means] a present time generator for generating present time data indicating a present time;

[comparing means for] a comparator comparing the period of time with the present time;

and

[requesting means for] a requestor submitting a request to [the] a center for obtaining use of the content when said [comparing means] comparator judges that the present time falls within the period of time; and

the center comprising:

[key supplying means for] a key supplier supplying said terminal with a key for unlocking the content when the present time falls within the period of time.

5. (ALLOWED - TWICE AMENDED) A sales system according to claim 4, wherein said center further comprises[:] a database registered with the period of the content[;].

Sub 2/4/6 (ALLOWED - TWICE AMENDED) A terminal according to claim 3, wherein said terminal further comprises[:] [second comparing means for] a second comparator comparing [the] an effective period of time with the present time and determining whether the present time is within the effective period of time.

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7. (ALLOWED - TWICE AMENDED) A terminal according to claim 2, wherein said terminal further comprises:

a disk for storing the contents; and

[installing means for] an installer installing a loader for the content.

Fig. 15
8. (ALLOWED - TWICE AMENDED) A sales system according to claim 4, further comprising:

[period data changing means for] a period data changer changing period data indicating a serving period of the contents; and

wherein said terminal further comprising:

[second comparing means for] a second comparator comparing [the] an effective period of time with the present time and determining whether the present time lies within the effective period of time.

9. (TWICE AMENDED) A computer readable storage device [readable by a computer] which contains content, a period concerning the content, and a program executed by a computer. [comprising:

Fig. 16
means for storing a content including a period concerning the content and a program executed by the computer]

wherein said program:

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~~Fig 1~~
reads the period;

generates present time data indicating a present time;

compares the period with the present time; and

judges that the present time data falls within said period or falls outside the period

[means for accessing said program].

10. (TWICE AMENDED) A computer readable storage device including both
content and a period concerning the content, the storage device is accessed by a computer,

~~Fig 2~~
[comprising:

a content assessable by a user via a computer;

period data indicating a period of time during which the contents can be accessed by the
user; and

a program which causes the computer to refuse access to the content by the user if a
present date falls outside of the time period indicated by the period data.],

wherein said computer:

reads the period;

generates present time data indicating a present time;

compares the period with the present time; and

judges that the present time data falls within the period or falls outside of said

period.

~~E4~~ 11. (TWICE AMENDED) A storage device according to claim 9, wherein the period is written as single terminal data indicating [the] starting or ending [of the] time interval.

~~Sub 82~~
~~E5~~ 12. (TWICE AMENDED) A computer-readable medium encoded with a computer program which performs the following functions:

reads a period, stored on a disk, indicating a period of time during which content on the disk can be served;

generates present time data indicating a present time;

compares the period with the present time; and

judges that the present time falls within the period or falls outside of said period

[transforms a result of said comparison to data reflecting that a user is allowed to utilize the content, when the present time falls within the period].

~~Sub 82~~
~~E6~~ 13. (TWICE AMENDED) A terminal comprising:

a reading device which reads a period, stored on a content medium, indicating a period of time during which content stored on the content medium can be served;

a clock for indicating a present time;

a comparator which determines if the present time falls within the period of time; and

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a server which serves [the] content on the content medium when the comparator
determines that the present time falls within the period of time.

14. (NOT AMENDED HEREIN) A sales system comprising:

a content medium storing a locked content and a period for the locked content;

a center which provides a key to unlock the locked content when a present time falls

within the period;

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15. (TWICE AMENDED) A method for ascertaining a sales period exists,
said method comprising:

reading a period stored on a medium indicating a serving period of time;

generating present time data indicating a present time; and

comparing the period stored on the medium with the present time to judge whether said
present time falls within the [sales] period of time.

Please add the following new claims.

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16. (NEW) A storage device readable by a computer comprising:

[means for] a storer storing a content including a period concerning the content and a
program executed by the computer, wherein said program:

reads the period;

generates present time data indicating a present time; and

compares the period with the present time;

[means for] an accessor accessing said program; and

[means for] a server serving the content when the period is compared with the present time and it is determined that the present time falls within said period.

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17. (NEW) A computer readable storage[?] comprising:

a content assessable by a user via a computer;

period data indicating a period of time during which the content can be accessed by the user;

a program which causes the computer to refuse access to the content by the user if a present date falls outside of the [time] period of time indicated by the period data; and

a serving unit to serve the content when said program does not cause the computer to refuse access to the content.

18. (NEW) A computer-readable medium encoded with a computer program which performs the following functions:

reads a period, stored on a disk, indicating a period of time during which a content on the disk can be served;